

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representatives by Examiner Poon in the June 14, 2006 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 6, 8 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,872,869 to Shimizu et al. (Shimizu) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,077,817 to Shang. The Office Action rejects claims 4, 5 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Shimizu in view of Shang and U.S. Patent No. 5,822,475 to Hirota et al. (Hirota). The Office Action rejects claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Shimizu in view of Shang and U.S. Patent No. 6,295,148 to Atlas. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

As agreed during the personal interview, the claims are amended to recite a "multifunction device." Applicants assert that, as agreed at the personal interview, this distinguishes over the applied references. More specifically, Applicants assert that the term "device" cannot be so broadly construed as to cover three instances of Shimizu's image processing apparatus (unnumbered) interconnected by optical fiber cables 700, each of the image processing apparatuses being a separate networked system including a reader unit 500, a printer unit 600, and an image information generating unit 1. Thus, Applicants respectfully assert that the claims are patentable over the Shimizu. Further, none of the other applied references remedies this deficiency of Shimizu.

For the forgoing reasons, Applicant's respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-9 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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